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Bush: Carter Aware of Intelligence Needs

By MARY JUDICE

President-elect Jimmy Carter is aware of the need for strengthening the nation's intelligence operation, according to Central Intelligence Agency chief George Bush.

Bush, speaking at Tulane University Monday night, said he briefed Carter twice on U.S. intelligence strengths and weaknesses and was "very impressed" by Carter's awareness of the need for strong intelligence.

The CIA faces an enormous job in

strengthening foreign intelligence, Bush said, but the agency must respect the rights of American citizens and give policy makers the best information.

Bush, a former United Nations ambassador, said intelligence mistakes were a thing of the past, since President Gerald Ford drafted new guidelines for intelligence activities this year.

"We're fully accountable to Congress and the President," Bush said. "Nothing is held back — everything is accounted for."

Commenting on the re-opening of the Congressional investigation into the assassination of President John Kennedy, he said the CIA would give full cooperation to the Representatives conducting the inquiry, but that he would not become involved personally.

"I'm uninformed and I don't feel in the slightest embarrassed," the director said.

He said he was looking ahead to the future of the CIA and had relegated the inquiry work to staff members.

The former head of the Republican Party said he was attempting to steer clear of politics.

"I have bent over backwards to stay out of partisan politics," he said, adding he hopes his critics recognize his efforts.

The major problem facing the agency at this time, he said, is an attempt to "get a fair slice of the budget."

He said the technical equipment needed to conduct intelligence activities is quite costly.

Bush said he would like to see Congressional oversight activities consolidated. He said he had made 40 appearances before Congressional committees and reported to seven federal agencies.

The director said perhaps a joint Congressional committee could function more efficiently than the three House committees and four Senate committees which now oversee CIA activities.

The former U.S. Representative from Texas said he has no plans to re-enter political life in his home state.